

MAJESTY MISLED:



TRAGEDY.

*Proud BUCKINGHAM, for Law too mighty grown,
A Patriot Dagger prob'd, and from the Throne
Sever'd its Minion. In succeeding Times,
May all those Favourites who adopt his Crimes
Partake his Fate; and every VILLIERS feel
The keen, deep Searching of a FELTON's Steel!*

C. CHURCHILL.



L O N D O N:
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MAJESTY Missed, &c.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A room in the earl of Lancaster's palace.

Enter the earls of Warwick, Warren, Nottingham, and Leicester.

Warw.  HRICE the rebellious Scots,
a sturdy race,
To rapine, insolence, and fraud
inur'd,

By our first *Henry's* arms have been subdu'd ;
Thrice have they bor'n the *English* yoke : their
king,

Baliol, who to our monarch homage paid,
And own'd he held his crown from him alone,
Hither in chains was captive led, to grace
Great *Henry's* triumph, and within the tow'r
In durance kept ; but now our *English* troops
Are routed by the *Scots*, and shamefully
Retreat. Like rav'nous wolves, the northern
rout

B

Infest

Infest our borders, prey on all they meet,
And, as some rapid torrent, over-spread
Adjacent counties, sweeping all away.
Such devastation do they make !

War. Yet more ;

Our fields, nor corn nor herbage do produce :
In vain the lab'ring peasant tills the ground ;
In vain the reapers with their sickles wait :
The crop, that seem'd so promising and fair,
Is by a gen'ral blight destroy'd ; the grass
Parch'd up and wither'd ; shrivell'd is the fruit,
Devoid of juice ; each tree, whose verdant leaves
Were pleasing objects to the eye, now wear
A russet liv'ry ; pale-fac'd Famine now
Rages thro' all the realm. A keen-edg'd sword
Destroys at once, and quickly ends our pain ;
But famine kills by piece-meal ; and to feel
Hourly the agonies of death, is sure
A curse so dreadful, that my reason faints,
And my soul shudders, at the very thought.

Not. Our second *Edward* hears the people's
groans,

And in their faces every day he sees
A thousand deaths, but yet regards 'em not.
Who can the cause of this calamity,
So epidemical, descry ?

Warw. Ask you,

My lord, the cause why heav'n this judgment
sends ?

To your remembrance call, when our late king,
Edward, the great, victorious, and the good,
Lay on his death-bed ; then his son, the prince,
Swore by the Virgin-mother he wou'd ne'er
Recall *Piers Gaveston* : regardless of his vow,
Scarce was he seated on the throne, when he
Pardon'd the caitiff, and with open arms
Receiv'd him ; where he bask'd, 'till we
Forced him away, and punish'd him with death.

Not.

Not. My lord, the time I do remember well.

Warw. If perjury in subjects be a crime,
And to that crime a punishment belongs,
Think you that heav'n will not due vengeance
take,

And punish subjects for their monarch's sins?

Nay, even kings themselves shall feel the stroke
Of Justice, who, though slow, yet still is sure;
If by repentance they refuse to make
Atonement for their vile enormities.

In one continued round of danger live
Princes, who spurn at Virtue's sacred rules;
For, as o'er *Damocles*, so o'er their heads,
The pointed sword hangs by a single thread.

Not. Causes, my lord, sufficient you have
nam'd,
Why heav'n pours down its wrath upon this
realm.

Leicest. Yet *Edward* revels in forbidden joys,
By the two *Spencers*, those curs'd fav'rites,
Those haughty panders of his lust, misled!

Warw. We must do something.

Leicest. Point the way, my lord;
I'll follow to relieve my countrymen,
And, at the hazard of my life, oppose
The up-start minions.

War. He, that backward seems
To crush those tyrannising ministers,
Has not the spirit of an *Englishman*.

Not. May he be branded with the odious
name
Of Coward, who denies to lend his hand!

War. To fall in an attempt so glorious, so
Brave, will establish an immortal fame.

Warw. Behold, his Highness *Lancaster* appears:
His counsel shall direct, his conduct shew
Us, what course to steer in this momentous,
This arduous enterprise.

*Enter the earl of Lancaster. The lords pay their
obeisance.*

Lan. Well met, my lords.
If from your looks I form my judgment right,
Some weighty bus'ness has your time employ'd :
If your designs be laudable---but there's
No room for doubt---I then will join,
And with you use my utmost pow'r : to me
Freely unbofom all your minds ; lock'd here,
[*Lays his hand on his breast.*]
The secret shall remain.

Warw. Though every where
The face of horror does appear, yet now
With joy you fill our hearts : your Highness has
Anticipated what we greatly wish'd ;
Good omen of success !

War. A common cause
Is ours ; the subjects grievances call loud
For quick redress.

Leicest. Who can redress expect,
While the two *Spencers* hold the reins of pow'r ?

Not. Our king supinely sits, wrapt up in ease,
And they his ductile temper govern ; they,
By their lewd counsel, soothe our second *Edward*,
And over-whelm him in debauchery.
'Mongst harlots he his time and treasure spends,
His queen abandons, and forsakes her bed.

War. This is the younger *Spencer's* curs'd
advice,
Satan's grand agent here on earth.

Lan. My lords,
Such havock Pestilence and Famine make,
The living scarce suffice t' inter the dead ;
And, 'till at court a reformation's made,
From heav'n what mercy can we hope to find ?
This good design can never take effect
'Till the two *Spencers* are remov'd : remov'd !

Banish'd

Banish'd for ever ! let that be our care,
And heav'nly wrath in time will be appeas'd.

War. When fav'rite-ministers a pow'r usurp,
A pow'r, which kings alone shou'd exercise,
They first enrich themselves, and then their
friends ;

Their autumn-friends ; for, as the leaves of trees,
Soon as the sap descends, the branches quit,
Whence they their daily nutriment receiv'd,
So fares it with those false dissembling friends,
When from promotion's pinnacle they see
Fav'rites precipitately headlong hurl'd ;
And when their crimes, expos'd to public view,
In all their hideous, frightful forms appear,
Against 'em will with bitterness inveigh,
Lest they be deem'd partakers of their guilt.

Lan. The shocks, and strong convulsions of a
state,

Oppression, rapine, loss of liberty,
And all the hardships subjects undergo ;
Signal misfortunes, and th' unhappy fall
Of princes, have been principally caus'd
By the corruption of their ministers ;
But when the people's hearts united are,
And to their monarch cemented by love,
We then may be assur'd his ministers
Are prudent, faithful, honest, wise, and just.

Leicest. How oft are men of learning, merit,
birth,

Postpon'd, and from the common herd a few
Garnish'd with titles, and pick'd out to serve
The public ? Kings the fountains are, 'tis true,
Whence honour flows ; and the respect we are
Oblig'd to pay, is to their office, not
The men : for we observe, in civil life,
There's some civility to servants due,
Not for their own, but for their master's sake :
But when these mushroom fav'rites tumble down,
Degraded

Degraded for ambition, av'rice, pride,
Their rapine, perfidy, or other crimes ;
Restraint, that dormant lay so long, breaks out,
And manifests a virulent contempt.

Not. Stupidity or phrenzy shall we call it,
When, by experience of their own times warn'd,
On the same precipices men will venture,
On which their wicked predecessors broke
Their necks ? But, oh ! Ambition's blind as Love :
They (like the famous fond philosopher)
Gaze at the stars, 'till, by their fate ordain'd,
Into the ditch unwarily they fall.

War. On the vain glitt'ring vanities above
Their eyes are always fix'd, and, being thus
Deluded by a false imagination,
They ne'er look down upon the many wrecks,
The shatter'd fortunes, and dismember'd bodies,
The heads, that justly are become a forfeit,
And odious mem'ries of their predecessors.

Leicest. With reason one wou'd think, the fate
of *Gav'ston*

Might have alarm'd the *Spencers*, and to them
A land-mark be t' avoid the fatal rock :
With complicated vices swol'n, there's no relief,
No cure, no remedy for them, but---death !

Warw. What of *Sejanus* long since was observ'd,
Holds true in these two tympanies of grandeur :
By notable, detested, crimes alone
Their favour must be purchas'd ; that's the way !
He that expects promotion from such spirits,
Must with his honour part, nay, ev'n his soul.

Not. If this sufficiently be weigh'd, we then
With justice may presume, that such as have
To honesty a strict regard, wou'd not
Stand gaping like *Camelions*, greedy
Camelions, to be puff'd with air, tainted
Air, of haughty and luxurious courts,

Where

Where int'rest scarce (unless by miracle)
Can be preserv'd but by a shipwreck'd conscience.

Leicest. If 'tis a thing so ticklish for good men
In honour long t' abide, and yet not act
Things that dishonourable are, what then
Of those portentous meteors can we say,
That we see blaze in our superior orb?
Tell me, my lords, are they not exhalations,
Noxious, pestiferous exhalations,
By wanton beams of favour, from the slime
And filth of all the world, drawn up?
Like blazing comets, mischief they presage,
The fall of empire, and a monarch's fate.

Warw. Insolent giants! arbitrary pow'r
They use; their colours they display, and dare
With justice, and our fundamental laws,
To combat!

War. They the helm of state do guide,
And form designs productive of its ruin.
Burly and fat they grow, fed by the juice
And substance of th' exhausted people:
Nay, their own houses (palaces they seem)
They build with others money, got by toil,
By pains and industry, which they extort,
And a whole kingdom wreck for their support.

Lan. Few have the wisdom to foresee how hard
It is, in greatness, maxims to pursue
That safe and honest are.

[*The people shout without, and cry, Heaven pre-
serve his highness, the earl of Lancaster!*]

What means that shout?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A concourse of people attend your palace-
gates; and some, as spokesmen for the rest,
wait

wait in the outward court, and request the honour of delivering their petition to your highness.

Lan. Give 'em admittance. [Exit serv.
These in time, my lords,
To us and to our cause may be of service.

Enter the servant, and six men with thin bodies, pale and meagre countenances.

What is't, my countrymen, you wou'd have done?

1 *Man.* An't please your highness, we humbly beg you will present this petition to his majesty, which contains our case, and indeed the case of all his poor subjects.

Lan. It shall be done. [He takes the petition.

2 *Man.* Heaven blefs your highness!

3 *Man.* Our oppression is so great, that we cannot get bread for our families; and though we have hitherto escaped the fire and famine, yet we know not whose turn it may be next. * * *

* * * * *
Lan. Your case, my countrymen, is very deplorable; assure yourselves that it shall be laid before the king: these lords and I will use our utmost efforts to get your grievances redressed, which are principally owing to his majesty's fav'rite statesman.

4 *Man.* I wish we had him among us, *Thomas*.

5 *Man.* And so do I, *William*.

Lan. Go to my treasurer, and order him, in my name, to give these honest friends one hundred pounds. [To his servants] Let it be equally distributed.

6 *Man.*

6 *Man.* By holy *Peter*, justice shall be done to every mother's son.

War. Accept our benevolence, as marks of the tenderness and compassion we have for you.

[*The lords give 'em money.*]

1 *Man.* We have seen one golden day at last.

[*Ahde.*] Heaven prosper your highness, and the noble lords. [*Exeunt, with the servant.*]

War. These men, my lord, if I mistake 'em not, Firm to your highness' int'rest are attach'd; You may at any time command their hearts.

Lan. Be not deceiv'd, my good lord *Warwick*, With outward shew; 'tis but a mere appearance.

In life one observation I have made,

Nor have I found it false; the vulgar *English*,

A fickle people, with the current swim,

And as the tide does ebb or flow, so they

Will with your int'rest join, and then retreat:

They've sense enough to choose the strongest side.

But come, my lords, 'tis dinner-time, which done, Let us pursue what is so well begun. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene, a state-room in the palace; the king and queen sitting under a canopy; the king, rising in a passion, speaks; then descends, and comes forward: the queen follows him.

King. I'll hear no more.

Queen. Will you not hear me speak?

By all the saints above, I will be heard.

What loads of ripening mischief there I see,

As if hell's agents had conspir'd your ruin!

When I behold what's in the womb of time,

A dreadful scene presents itself; a scene!

Which, if thou could'st perceive it, wou'd relax

Thy nerves, and make thy senses stagger.

C

King.

King. What!
Art thou mad? or has some fiend possess'd thee?

Queen. Neither; but thou art by a fiend
possess'd;

A fiend, whom pray'rs nor tears can exorcise,
Nor holy water keep thee from his pow'r:
Deep in th' abyss of sin by him thou 'rt plung'd,
By that infernal fiend, the younger *Spencer*.

King. Ha! *Isabella*, speak'st thou thus of him!
Of my best counsellor! my chiefeft friend!

Queen. Of thy worst enemy I speak.

King. By heav'n,
So riveted he stands, so near my heart,
I'd sooner lose my crown than part with him.

Queen. Mark, *Edward*, what I say, and mark it
well;

Long by thy pandar thou hast been misled;
The people murmur, and the lords complain.
Thy *Spencer's* pride the peers no more will bear,
Nor will the populace his pow'r endure:
Discharge him, and your subjects hearts reclaim,
Or with your sceptre you must part for ever.
This, written in the book of fate, I see;
Yet you may still reverse your destiny.

King. Is then my fate conditional? if so,
Sure it may be revers'd whene'er I please.

Queen. The time is fix'd, and when that's once
elaps'd,
Can never be recall'd.

King. 'Tis well thou art
Our queen; or, by the majesty of heav'n,
Thy head shou'd make atonement for thy words.

Queen. Weak and misguided prince, I fear you
not.

Is this the counsel that your *Spencer* gave?
Say, has he not withdrawn you from my bed?
Have I convers'd with you, or seen your face,
For two long months? and yet he seeks my life.

Now

Now, by the holy Virgin, I declare
 Myself his enemy, and he or I
 Shall have a fall.--- O *Edward! Edward!*
 With the best qualities, a prince, when born,
 Is a calm sea, with pow'r and riches fill'd,
 That might to all the universe do good,
 If the winds wou'd but let it gently flow
 According to its nature; but, alas!
 Conditions so exalted rarely want
 A swarm of flatterers, mere insects,
 By the warm beams of royal sun-shine bred,
 Out of the most pois'nous putrefaction.

Enter the younger Spencer.

King. Most opportunely art thou come, my friend;

The saints have sent thee sure to my relief.

Spen. What incident has discompos'd the king?
 Madam, is *Edward* ruffled in his mind?

What have you said to make him look dejected?

Queen. Those questions to your royal pupil
 put:

Under a zealous show of his adorer,
 Thou, traitor like, hast made thyself his master;
 And by a counterfeit pretence of service,
 You over him an empire exercise,
 Who vainly thinks he may command the world.
 His sacred name a pass-port is become
 To all thy mischiefs; his authority
 Is made by thee a sanctu'ry to crimes;
 His revenue, as thou dost manage it,
 Is tinder to debauch'ry, a supply
 For riot; and his pow'r thy instrument
 Of dire revenge, a dreadful scourge, a plague
 To all the people, who detest thy ways,
 And whom it ought to cherish and protect.

Spen. Spare your artill'ry, Madam; if at me
 You level it, 'twill do no execution:

I spurn at malice, envy I deride.

Queen. Such an insufferable insolence
Was never seen in *English* courts before;
But mark me, thou shalt dearly pay for it.

Spen. Your threats are impotent, and I despise
'em:

Firm as a rock I stand, nor am I mov'd
By roaring billows, and tempestuous winds.

Queen. Thy haughty grandeur and exalted
pride

Shall from their precipice be quickly hurl'd,
To their primæval chaos be reduc'd,
And ages yet to come shall curse thy name.
I'll probe thy soul, and, if thou hast not lost
The sense of feeling, make thee wince and
flounce.

Spen. Madam, proceed, and give your passion
vent.

Queen. Hast thou not, traitor, with thy ma-
ster's hands,

Made innocents the butt of private spleen?
Adjudg'd those guilty of high-treason, who
Wou'd not fall down, and worship thee a god?
By fatal wars, and ignominious treaties,
(Forsaking the true int'rest of thy country,
And playing with the body politic
The mountebank of state, 'till you at once
Into a fever and consumption cast it)
Thou didst endeavour all thou cou'dst to bring
The people to despair; and gladly wou'd
Reduce the honest sort to such a misery,
'Till for their preservation they cou'd find
No other way was left, but a revolt.
Thus then, by their forc'd disobedience, wou'dst
Thy own curs'd villainies, and treason, palliate;
Then, when the nation, caitiff! thou hast put
In a combustion, that thyself hast kindled,
To save your life, trip off with all its spoils.

Spen.

Spen. These are reflexions, sire, obliquely cast
At you, and you are wounded thro' my sides.

Queen. That's an expression trite and obsolete;
An artifice so stale, the world nauseates it.—
Rouse, *Edward*, thy lethargic soul; and if
Thou hast the spirit of thy father in thee,
Shew it; shew thyself a king, for now
What art thou but a cypher? Re-assume
The reins of pow'r, and make the *Spencers* know,
That you, not they, do bear imperial rule.

King. Her words are sharp, and like a two-
edg'd sword
They cut; I see my fate, yet can't ward off the
stroke. [*Aside.*

Deep melancholy on my mind does creep,
My spirits languid grow: what shall I do?
[*Speaks to Spencer.*

Tell me, what method you wou'd have me take?

Spen. My best advice you freely shall command;
I'll rack invention 'till I find a way
Your peace of mind and vigour to restore.

Queen. Listen to him, who has possess'd thy
mind,

And seiz'd on all the avenues thereto;
Scarce can thy confessor an entrance find:

Spencer's thy great physician: he'll invent
Pleasures, untasted, for thy sated soul;

With pungent sharpnesses thy sleeping lusts
Awake, which languish now, and can no more.

O *Edward, Edward!*

*When princes to their favorites give way,
And let them govern what themselves shou'd sway,
The people murmur, they aloud complain,
And miserable make their monarch's reign.*

[*Ex. queen at one door, the king and
Spencer at another.*]

End of the First ACT.

MAJESTY



MAJESTY Milled, &c.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A room in the palace.

Enter sir Hugh Spencer the elder.

E. Spen.



Y me instructed, by my
counsel led,
My son has crown'd his wishes
with success ;
Now on the top of Fortune's
wheel he stands,

And is a king in all things, but the name :
His monarch's weakness has the ladder been,
Whose roundlets rais'd him to promotion's
height,

And *Edward* holds him nearest to his soul.
Princes like froward children must be us'd ;
Humour their passions, and you gain their hearts.

Enter king Edward and young Spencer.

King. My *English* NESTOR, faithful counsellor,
Whose silver locks thy wisdom indicate,
Give to thy king, with doubtful thoughts
perplex'd,
Thy sage advice, and calm his raging breast.

E. Spen.

E. Spen. By ties of gratitude and duty bound
To you I am, who hast vouchsaf'd to place
A confidence in me, and in my son ;
And as you condescend to make request,
Yet your requests to us commands we deem,
And shall as such be faithfully obey'd.

King. When in the annals of old hoary Time
The lives of *English* monarchs shall be read,
Posterity will shake their heads, and say
What the first *Edward* gain'd, the second lost :
He conquer'd *Scotland*, and subdu'd their kings ;
Now *England* from their king a conquest dreads.
These, these invade my heart, disturb my soul ;
My mind is rack'd, and I can find no ease.

E. Spen. From partial censure none can e'er be
free ;
But when posterity your life shall scan,
And with impartial judgment trace your steps,
Surpris'd they'll stand ; amaz'd that you, at once
In foreign and domestick wars engag'd,
Cou'd make so brave a stand, and save your
crown ;

That you, your country from destruction sav'd,
Attack'd on right and left by hostile arms,
And in the centre by a vip'rous brood,
Who owe their lives to your benignant warmth.
Well vers'd in war, his conduct man may shew ;
But heav'n alone does give the victory.

King. The rebel-barons still in arms remain,
Join'd by a num'rous band of knights and squires,
And, like a snow-ball, as they march, increase :
Their muster'd numbers are at least ten thousand.
If some expedient be not quickly found
To dissipate their troops, or stop their progress,
We soon may see them at our palace-gates :
The commonalty too complain, and say,
They are no longer able to endure
Their great oppression and calamities.

Y. Spen.

Y. *Spen.* If my advice your majesty approves,
 Forthwith a proclamation issue forth,
 Granting a gen'ral pardon to all in arms.
 If this produces not the wish'd effect,
 Let it be rumour'd, that the *French* intend
 T' invade the realm with twenty thousand
 men.

Increase your army; your superior force
 Will soon subdue the rebels: do not spare
 The lives of any wealthy captives; seize
 All their estates, and to your use condemn 'em.
 This, *in terrorem*, must with speed be done,
 To caution others from like practices.

E. *Spen.* Nor is it necessary, sire, that you
 Perform your promise, or your oath fullfil;
 To keep your word is to depose yourself,
 And part with your prerogatives at once.
 From ev'ry law, both human and divine,
 You stand exempted by your quality.
 The oaths of princes in the scales are put
 With those of lovers, play-things for the winds,
 Tois'd up and down in sport, and not regarded
 But when they prove conducive to their int'rest.

King. How shall I satisfy my people?

Y. *Spen.* Sire,
 'Tis weakness to regard their sighs and groans:
 Are they ought else but animated dirt;
 A herd of prattling beasts, design'd your slaves,
 As well by nature as by fortune? Why
 Were they born, or for what are they fit,
 But to be instruments to all your pleasures,
 And to your glory sacrifices made?

E. *Spen.* The nobles, who will no companions
 bear,
 Boast their antiquity, and let 'em boast it;
 But if you yield to what they shall desire,
 If you regard complaints the people make,
 The most invet'rate foes to growing greatness;
 Then

Then will you lose the power of rewarding
 A true, just, faithful, honest servant.
 Then you must live a poor, precarious king,
 Of royalty a shadow, and be forc'd
 To call the state together, to dispose
 Of the least office that is in the realm.

Y. Spen. Besides; can you forsake a person, who
 Hath been so dear to you, and not condemn
 The conduct you have shewn for many years,
 And a past blindness to the world declare,
 Or else a present fickleness?

King. Enough;
 Come to my arms, my faithful monitors.

[*He embraces them.*]

With joy, my friends, your counsel I approve;
 My soul shall now enjoy her halcyon hours
 Of peace; and to the winds I give my cares;
 Quick let them waft them to some distant shore,
 There to remain and trouble me no more;
 I'll revel in delight, be brisk and gay,
 And in soft pleasures pass the time away. [*Exeunt.*]

*Scene, a room in the earl of Lancaster's house; the
 earl and the other lords sitting at a table.*

Lan. My lords, already have I plainly shewn
 Our common danger, if we find not means
 The *Spencers* to remove from court. The king
 Harbours revenge within his royal breast,
 But is incapable of managing
 His foul designs; and yet by their assistance,
 Whose great abilities by far exceed
 The wicked politics of *Gaveston*,
 What may we not from second *Edward* fear?

Warw. The two new ministers are no less
 guilty
 Than was the traitor *Gav'ston*, of encroaching
 On all the peoples privileges, rights,
 And liberties.

D

Leicest.

Leiceſt. We hitherto have us'd
Our beſt endeavours to reduce within
Its proper channel, where it ought to flow,
Royal authority.

Not. But thoſe endeavours,
My lords, will quickly ineffectual prove,
If to his former courſes *Edward* be
Permitted to return; he then again
Will make 'em ſlaves, and ſpurn 'em to the
ground.

War. I ſee no method to remove our fears,
To diſſipate our doubts, and give us eaſe,
To take away the yoke the people bear,
And make 'em all, as they have been born, free,
But by the death, at leaſt the baniſhment,
Of thoſe proud haughty men, the *Spencers*.

Lan. What ſay your lordſhips to this good
advice,
This ſalutary counſel?

All. We agree.

Lan. Well ſpoke, my lords, you bravely have
reſolv'd;

Now to the palace inſtantly we'll go, [They riſe.
And this petition ſhall the baſis be
Of our remonſtrance, and the *Spencers'* ruin.

[Exeunt.

Scene, a room in the palace.

Enter queen Iſabella.

Queen. How often have I quench'd the flames,
that *Gav'ſton*

Rais'd, and to their king did reconcile
The barons! but the two new fav'rites ſince
Have ſet the nation in a blaze; yet ſtill,
By ſome expedients, I extinguiſh'd it.
And yet, as often as, by my good turns,
The peace and welfare of the kingdom are
Reſtor'd, ſo often by thoſe miniſters
Public tranquillity again is broke,

And

And vile oppression quickly does ensue.
 Redoubled strength their giant-projects gain,
 When over-power'd, and cast upon the ground ;
 But an *Herculean* policy and strength
 Will hold them fast, and squeeze 'em till they
 die.

*Enter chancellor Baldoc, who, seeing the queen,
 starts back.*

'Tis strange, my lord, a woman can affright
 you ;
 Or does your guilty conscience make you start ?
 If that's the case, you quickly may appease it
 By your repentance, if you will renounce
 Your evil practices ; and this I'm sure
 You cannot do, till you forsake your master,
 Young *Spencer*, who first tempted you to sin.

Bal. Madam, I was surpris'd to see you here,
 And as I would not interrupt your privacy,
 I thought it was my duty to retire.-----
 As I'm not guilty of the charge you bring,
 My conscience, thank the saints, enjoys her
 peace.

Queen. Your purse too, thank the *Spencers*, is
 so full,
 That now, as I suppose, it takes its rest.
 Is it not so ? Declare the truth, my lord.

Bal. Weighty affairs of state are on the anvil,
 And I am summon'd to attend the king.
 Madam, I wait your majesty's commands.

Queen. [*Pausing*] Our *Edward* tell from me, his
 throne now shakes,
 And the crown totters on his head. This say
 Of him, his fav'rite *Spencer*, and yourself :
 The king, at best, is but an o'er-grown fool,
 The knight's a knave, the bishop is his tool.

[*Exit.*

Bal.

Bal. Not to the king will I those words relate,
But to young *Spencer*; and I much mistake,
If *Isabella* will not soon have cause
Her boldness to repent, and wish that she
From such unguarded words had kept her tongue.
[Exit.

Scene, the king's closet.

*Enter king Edward, who places himself at the head
of a table; the chancellor next to him; on whose
right-hand sits the elder Spencer, and on the
king's left hand the younger Spencer.*

King. This news from *France* unseasonably
comes,
Damps all my joy, and pierces to my heart.
At such a crisis what is to be done?

Bal. Some persons of well-known integrity,
Vers'd in intrigues of state, of subtle wit,
And penetrating genius, brave, undaunted,
And read in politics, must quick be sent
To treat, and, if 'tis possible, prolong
The day appointed for your doing homage.

King. 'Tis well advis'd: I know not one so
fit,
Not one who answers such a character,
As this same worthy knight, sir *Hugh*.

[He points to the elder Spencer.
*Haste, honest Spencer, make what haste you can;
Ere to your journey's end you do attain,
Instructions by our messenger shall reach you.
One minute lost long contests may create.*

E. Spen. Proud of the honour done me by my
king,
I fly, and equal pace will keep with time. [Exit.

King. My good lord chancellor, prepare th'in-
structions;
Affix the seal, and my sign manual then
Shall ratify 'em.

[Exit Chan.
---Again

---Again my mind is calm ;
 And yet my soul presages something strange.
 If people knew what monarchs undergo,
 With what anxieties they're agitated,
 They wou'd not covet sure the diadem.
 The mountain-cedars feel the tempest's rage,
 But in the vale the cottage is secure.---

[A confused noise without.]

Ha ! hearken, sure our palace is beset ;
 Call all our guards, and force with force repel.

[As Spencer goes out, he is push'd back by the earl of Lancaster, who enters with the other lords his confederates.]

Lan. Thou dastard knight, to heav'n and man
 a traitor !

By holy *Paul*, I'd strike thee to the ground,
 Did not the beams of majesty protect thee.

King. What is the matter ?

Lan. Was it ever known,

A peer, whose veins were fill'd with royal blood,
 Shou'd be deny'd admittance to his prince ?

King. No ; but we then discuss'd affairs of
 state,

Affairs of great importance to the realm :
 These in the cabinet employ'd our thoughts.

However, since you now are hither come,
 Speak your mind freely, and you shall be hear'd.

[Lancaster, kneeling, offers the petition to the king ; the younger Spencer stretching out his hand to take it, the earl draws it back, and rising, speaks to young Spencer with an air of indignation.]

Lan. Think'st thou I kneel to thee, thou mis-
 creant ?

Let supple courtiers adoration pay
 To thee, their idol ; I disdain the thought.

[He approaches the king, and on his knees delivers the petition ; then rises.]

Sire,

Sire, the nobility and gentry see,
 With grief, what mischiefs in the realm are spread,
 And every day more dangers does produce.
 Like good physicians they, ere 'tis too late,
 Some remedies determin'd to provide,
 Hoping your subjects hardships to redress.
 Oppressions, violences, (direful things !)
 Daily committed in their open view,
 Encourage them to make this information,
 And before you, their sov'reign, lay 'em all.

Warw. Your fav'rite *Spencers*, by mismanagement,
 And their ill conduct in affairs of state,

[*Spencer starts.*

Of whom alone your majesty takes counsel,
 Are the sole cause of all those great calamities,
 That now so mis'rably afflict the realm.

Not. So great an int'rest have we in your govern-
 ment,

But still a greater in your royal person,
 That we, in duty, honour, conscience bound,
 Take leave t' inform your sacred majesty
 Of all the crimes, and every misdemeanour,
 At any time committed by your subjects ;
 Nor shall their rank, their station, or degree,
 Though to your majesty in blood allied,
 Deter us from our just, our honest purpose.

War. The flagrant crimes, that do unpunish'd
 pass,

Tend daily to disturb the public peace,
 And threaten a subversion of the state.

Leicest. With all humility we therefore pray,
 And on our knees your majesty implore,

[*They kneel.*

For ever to dismiss your fav'rite *Spencers*,
 For ever from your presence, court, and council.
 With monstrous vices they corrupt your mind,
 Make you neglect those royal offices,
 Which from your hands the King of Kings re-
 quires. As

As all the people their subjection own,
 So you are bound to give 'em your protection.
 But, oh! dishonourably have you, fire,
 What justice does require, neglected long;
 Your royal subjects in the *North* expos'd
 To the fell rage of th'invading *Scots*,
 And to th'extremities of want and hunger.
 Princes, who will not, when they have the pow'r,
 Redress the grievances the people feel,
 Do authorise 'em in effect; and though
 To the too credulous they may appear
 Not guilty, yet a day will come,
 When they to heav'n must give a just account.

[*Young Spencer whispers to the king.*]

Lan. Pardon us therefore, fire, that we insist
 On your removing your two ministers,
 Those wicked, lewd, and evil counsellors.
 If our request your majesty refuse,
 For yours, and for your people's good design'd;
 Then in the plainest terms we do declare,
 That at the hazard of our lives and fortunes,
 And all that we hold dear, we'll do it.

King. Has Faction crept within our palace-gates?
 And dares she in the cabinet to shew
 Her bold, Corinthian face? is *Lancaster*,
 Our uncle *Lancaster*, become the head
 Of this fell monster, this unruly *Hydra*?
 By all the saints, my lords, we swear, that death,
 A sudden death, shou'd be each baron's portion,
 Were he not from our royal house descended;
 But yet a pardon, for his sake, we give you.
 The people's grievances shall be redress'd;
 Before the parliament I'll lay the case,
 And to what they judge proper, will consent.

Warw. We thank your majesty; this prudent
 step
 Your subjects best affections will regain.

[*Ex. the scene closes.*
Scene.]

Scene, a room in the palace.

Enter the princess Eleanor.

Elean. What wretched fate attends a royal
maid,

Forc'd to espouse the man she cannot love !
My royal uncle bids me to regard
Spencer, as one whom he designs my husband,
Though by his birth inferior much to me.
The queen commands me not to entertain
A wretch so despicably proud and haughty.
Lovely he is in personage and shape,
But, ah ! his temper the most profligate ;
Revenge, pride, rapine and debauchery,
The most intolerable vices, crimes
Of blackest dye, have totally possess'd him ;
And yet this wretch is chos'n to be my consort.

Enter queen Isabella.

Queen. Dear niece, your looks an inward grief
betray :

Why fits that dismal cloud upon your face ?
Dispel that token of your heavy sorrow,
And re-assume your former gaiety.

Elean. Who can be gay, when with perplexing
thoughts

The mind is agitated ? Mirth from me
Is flown for ever ; and tranquillity,
I once enjoy'd, toss'd by tempestuous winds,
Never to come within my reach.

Queen. From whence
Proceeds this strange, this wild imagination ?

Elean. I wish it were imaginary ; but,
Alas ! the cause produces a reality.

Queen. What cause ? Your riddles explanation
want :

Speak

Speak to be understood.

Elean. Madam, you know
What strict injunctions on me have been laid;
My royal uncle says I must receive
Young *Spencer* as a suitor; and you, madam,
As strictly do command the contrary.
Thus am I bandied like a shuttle-cock;
And on which side it is my lot to fall,
If I please one, the other I displease,

Queen. Your option you shall have.---Take to
your arms

That vile polluted creature, and receive
Your uncle's blessing; but you'll quickly find
That blessing turn'd a curse on you and yours.
But if to my advice you do adhere,
Heav'n will then pour a real blessing
On you and your posterity: I'll try
To wean the king from his intended purpose,
And cause him to withdraw his rash command.

Elean. May the saints send you good success!
for though

To *Spencer's* person I have no aversion,
Yet I abominatè his principles;
Nor can I e'er be happy with the man,
Whose complicated vices render him
Odious to heav'n and earth.

Queen. It joys me much
To hear you thus condemn his evil courses.

Enter king Edward.

King. Well, *Eleanor*, have you well weigh'd,
And thoroughly consider'd, my commands?

Elean. Most royal sire, I have.

Queen. Yes; in the scales
Of reason, honour, justice, they were plac'd,
But prove too light. What! wou'd you make our
niece

E

A sacrifice

A sacrifice to him, the vilest creature,
By whom, to foreign princes, you are render'd
A scorn, and hated by all civil men?

King. Shall I, the monarch of this island, bear
Such insults from my queen?

Queen. Art thou a monarch?

How comes it then to pass that you are govern'd
By the two *Spencers*? Call to mind thy flight,
Thy shameful flight, from *Bannoc-Bourn*;
When valiant *Glo'ster*, *Clifford*, many peers,
Se'en hundred knights, 'quires, officers of note,
And twice five thousand soldiers, lost their lives,
Bravely disputing, inch by inch, the ground,
While you and *Spencer* run away to *York*.

Is he a fit companion for our niece?

A coward, who, to luxury inur'd,

Pampers his lustful appetite, and yet

Commits more cruelties than wild *Barbarians*.

Elean. O fire, if in your royal breast remains
One spark of your affection, show it now,
And let it kindle in you soft compassion.

Thus bending, first to heav'n, and next to you,
Hear, and indulge a hapless maid's petition:
Recall, great sire, your rigorous injunction,
And force me not to lead a wretched life.

King. Rise, *Eleanor*; my will shall be a law
To you and all my subjects. They that dare
Their disobedience show, shall feel my wrath;
And unknown vengeance light upon their heads.
Be dutiful. [Exit.]

Queen. Inexorable man!

*When kings grow lawless, tyrants they commence;
And to obey 'em argues want of sense.*

End of the Second ACT.

MAJESTY



MAJESTY Mifled, &c.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Scene, a room in the palace.

Enter king Edward.

King.  *Udacious mutineers ! by holy Paul,*
These boift'rous, turbulent rebellious lords

(Under my pow'r if I can once reduce 'em)
Shall fall a sacrifice to my resentment.
So much they have provok'd my spleen, so high
My anger rais'd, not one of 'em I'll spare ;
Not e'en my uncle Lancaster ; 'gainst whom
Implacable revenge my breast contains,
'Though in appearance we were reconcil'd.

Enter younger Spencer.

Y. Spen. *Methinks those gloomy looks, my prince, declare*
The royal heart with wrathful thoughts replete.
What has incens'd your sacred majesty ?

King. *Is that a proper question to be ask'd ?*
Did you not hear, and e'en your eyes can witness,

The haughty insolence, wherewith the lords

Have dar'd to treat their lawful sovereign.
Think'st thou that I will bear it tamely? No,
By all the saints, I'll wreak my vengeance on them.

Y. Spencer. I must confess, most royal sir, that
they

Beyond their duty have themselves exerted,
So far transgress'd the bounds of their allegi-
ance,

Impartial judges would pronounce their lives
For their high-treason forfeited.

King. Their heads
Shall for their rashness an atonement make,
Nor shall aught else my vengeance pacify.

Y. Spen. Their threats were impious and un-
dutiful;

But their remonstrances to alleviate all
The people's grievances, to you, great sir,
Directed were; yet still I was the butt,
At which their bearded arrows were discharg'd.

King. I well perceiv'd it.

Y. Spen. But perhaps no harm
To you, sir, was intended; and their counsel,
It may be, was well meant.

King. I think not so!
To give advice before that I requir'd it,
Was haughty pride and arrogance in them.
Officioufness, if not in time prevented,
Will take ambition's wings, and soar so high,
'Twill be no easy task to bring it down.

Therefore these tow'ring lords must be made
humble,
Their pow'r restrain'd, their haughty pride a-
bated.

Y. Spen. Now, by some plausible pretence of
mercy,
I must insinuate myself still deeper
Into this credulous, soft monarch's favour.

[*Aside.*
King

King. What say'st thou, *Spencer*, must it not be so?

Spen. Rather than you again in civil wars
Should be involv'd, O let me suffer, sir;
Let me be made a bleeding sacrifice
To their revenge, if by my single life
Your ease can be establish'd: I shall deem
My blood well spill'd, if that wou'd but reclaim
Your subjects loyalty, their love restore.
He, that for his king and country dies,
Strongest assurances to both does give
Of his affection, and his firm attachment.

King. Thou wonderfully good! thou glorious man!

Who to the int'rest of your king and country
Wou'd'st willingly thy head devote. The lords,
The factious lords, thy offer wou'd receive
As willingly, and to their furious rage,
Their envy, jealousy, a martyr make thee.
But let me see, as your's and their petition,
In this particular the same appear,
Suppose, to please both sides, I give you up.

Y. Spen. Defend me, heav'n; ye saints above,
prevent it:

What! have I carried on the jest so far?

[*Aside.*

King. Were this the case, in whom could I
confide?

This hand I lose in losing thee, my friend.

[*Extends his right-hand.*

Y. Spen. A pannic fear had seiz'd me, and my
soul

An ague felt; but now all's well again.

[*Aside.*

King. Think'st thou they wou'd not, *Spencer*,
soon dethrone us,

In durance hold our person, seize our crown,

And

And fix it on the head of that vile traitor,
Our uncle, the feditious *Lancaster*?

Y. Spen. If menaces, rebellion, civil wars,
Can aught avail to make their chief a king;
In his mock royalty he then may strut,
While knaves to the usurping villain bend.
But these are childish dreams, chimæras all;
And as there's scarce a possibility
Of their success, e'en let us change the scene,
And you, fire, like the ruler of the day,
Burst thro' the clouds; so shall each radiant beam
Its pow'r display, and gild the hemisphere.

King. Some angel sure inspir'd your tongue :
behold,

A train of nymphs appear; among 'em one
[*They look towards the door.*]
Not made of common mould, divinely fair,
And worthy of a monarch's kind embrace.

Y. Spen. 'Tis she, by heav'n 'tis she, for whom
the net

Was spread: the virgin cannot now escape;
Soon to your eager arms she shall be brought.

King. To meet the motion of the blooming
maid,

While I prepare, go, *Spencer*, and receive her:
Fill, fill her breast with the warm thoughts of
love;

Soft let thy words, as whisp'ring *Zephyrs*, prove.
[*Exeunt severally.*]

Scene, a chamber in the palace.

*Enter Emilia and several gentlewomen at one door,
and young Spencer at another, who salutes them.*

Y. Spen. Ladies, I have his majesty's commands
to assure you of a kind reception; and I am ap-
pointed your conductor.

1 Gen.

Gen. Since we have the honour to be introduced by the politest gentleman in *England*; since the great *Spencer* does condescend to be the master of the ceremonies, there is no room to doubt a welcome, answerable to his generous soul.

Y. Spen. An entertainment you shall meet, that suits the grandeur of the court; and I will endeavour to make it agreeable to your inclinations.---- But here's a virgin of divine original; her eyes with double splendor shine, and the crown-jewels would lose their lustre, were they placed near such brilliant jewels as these.

Emil. This is the common language of the court; and now, what fame reported, I find verified: courtiers are pleased with being flattered, and take delight in spreading the infection. Such fulsome adulation I abominate. [*Aside.*]

Y. Spen. Permit me, madam, to conduct you.
[*Takes Emil. by the hand.* [*Exeunt.*]

Scene, a room.

Enter king Edward.

King. From that small inlet I may see what passes, [*Points to the scene.*

Take a full view of the celestial maid,
And with her beauty feed my am'rous soul.

[*Steps forward and peeps; then returns.*
More charms the nymph displays than the fam'd
dame,

Who kindled in the *Grecian* world a war,
And for whom ancient *Troy* was laid in ashes.
When beauty raises in our breasts desire,
And love invites us to regale our senses;
Can flesh and blood withstand the sweet tempta-
tion?

Kings, in such cases, are like common men;
Lay those aside, terrestrial gods they are:

Bour

Born to controul, to be by all obey'd.---
Impatience wrecks me; 'twill not sure be long
Ere *Spencer* brings the lovely sacrifice. [Exit.]

Scene, a room.

Spencer and the gentlewomen at a banquet.

Enter a messenger.

Mess. I have his majesty's commands to acquaint your honour that the council is ready to sit upon affairs of great importance, and that no business can be done without your advice.

Emil. This favorite, *Spencer*, is address'd with as much reverence as if he were king of *England*.

[*Aside.*

Y. Spen. Ladies, pray chuse what pleases your palates; I am sorry that his majesty's commands oblige me to leave such good company.---Fill the glasses.---Ladies, good health to you, and particularly to those who want good husbands.

3. Gen. I may venture to say we are all married, except that young lady, *Emilia*.

Y. Spen. 'Tis great pity that a lady in such bloom should waste the spring of her life.---Madam, since you desire to kiss the king's hand, give me leave to introduce you.

Emil. My heart flutters most immoderately; grant heaven that it be not an ill omen.---Our first parent suffer'd for her curiosity; I hope I shall not pay so dear for mine.

[*Young Spencer leads her out; the scene closes.*

Scene, a chamber.

Enter king Edward.

King. Let monks and base plebeians count their beads,

And

And to dull Virtue's precepts be confin'd;
 Wide as the universe my mind shall range,
 And sweet variety shall be my choice.
 A monarch's soul shou'd be as free as air,
 As boundless too, and not to be controul'd
 By musty morals, or the stated rules
 Of priests, which they themselves ne'er practise.
 Why did heav'n form us for exalted stations;
 Or why so keen our appetites were made,
 If we must place ourselves upon a level
 With the base vulgar, and restrain desire?
 My senses shall be gratify'd, and nature
 Indulg'd, whilst rampant love shall sway my heart.

Enter young Spencer and Emilia.

Y. Spen. To England's monarch this young
 nymph does sue,
 And humbly begs to kiss your royal hand.

King. So fair a suitor must not be denied,
 For small the favour is that she requires.

[The king offers his hand, she kneels and kisses it.
 Rise, beauteous maid; to you more honour's due,
[She rises.

And I confer it thus with fervency.

[He embraces, and kisses her.

Go, *Spencer*, to our niece, fair *Eleanor*;
 Deliver our commands: such is our pleasure.

*[Exit. Spencer, looking at the king, and pointing
 at Emilia.*

Emil. What means your majesty?

King. No harm, my child:
 Lovely thou art, and worthy of a crown,
 Which on thy head I'd place, were I unmarried;
 But since my kind intentions are obstructed,
 Yet I will give what is in my pow'r,
 A heart with love, with mighty love, surcharg'd.

Emil. To me so great an honour don't belong;
 I cannot, royal sire, nor dare accept it:

F

Your

Your queen long since has kept possession of it,
 And she alone can boast a legal title.
 How can I claim what is another's right?
 Or, if it were, fire, at your own disposal,
 Could I secure a heart so us'd to range?
 To the next lure the wanderer would fly,
 And there remain till something more engaging
 Would tempt it to exchange its residence.

King. O, say not so! though children may be
 won

By gaudy toys, and glitt'ring outside show,
 When monarchs fix their hearts, they take deep
 root,

And firm as rocks remain.

Emil. Did you not give
 Your heart to royal *Isabella*, fire?
 You fix'd it there, and let it there remain.
 Curs'd, and be doubly curs'd, the nymph who
 dares

Attempt to sap or undermine her right!

King. Nay then, if fair means can't prevail, by
 force

I'll satisfy my love. [*The king takes hold of her.*]

Emil. Your lust you mean;
 And, to secure my virtue, thus I fly.

[*She breaks from him.*]

King. If *Daphne* flies, *Apollo* will pursue.

[*He runs and seizes her.*]

Emil. Be mine the fate of *Daphne*, gracious
 heav'n!

King. Now yield to my embrace; for 'tis in
 vain

To call for help.

Emil. Heav'n will assistance send,
 And from a vile detested rape defend me.
 Consider, fire, my spotless innocence;
 Consider what an odium such an action,
 So foul, so black, will bring upon your name.

Good

Good sheperds will their flocks preserve, and
not

Devour 'em ; be thou the good shepherd, fire,
Nor like the wolf make the poor lamb thy prey.
If kings are heav'n's vicegerents, they'll protect
From violence their subjects ; but the dregs,
The refuse of the people, lost to virtue,
Will rapes commit to please their brutal passions.
Let me implore you, fire---

King. Nor pray'rs nor tears
Shall now divert me from my fixt resolves.
Why do I trifle thus my time away ?

One moment's stay an age of pleasure loses.

Emil. Yet hear me, royal fire---

King. Not one word more ;
Yield to our pleasure, or I'll make you know
That I am king ; as king I'll be obey'd.

[*He takes her in his arms by force ; she struggles.*]

Emil. Assist me, heaven ! help, help ! a rape,
a rape !

King. Like *Jason* thus I bear away the prize,
The golden prize.

[*As the king is carrying her off in his arms, enter,
queen Isabella.*]

Queen. Base ravisher, forbear !
Is this the fruit of thy curs'd minion's counsel ?

[*Emilia disengages herself from the king, and runs
to the queen.*]

King. Ha ! *Isabella* ? all my hopes are blasted.

[*Aside.*]

Emil. My pray'rs are heard ; and heav'n, most
gracious queen,

Hither conducted you to save a virgin
From vile pollution : grant me your protection ;
Preserve the maid, whom you have timely
rescu'd

From being made to lust a sacrifice.

Queen. You for safe-conduct may on me de-
pend ;

F 2

But

But say by whose device, whose stratagem,
Were you deluded hither? Seldom does
A maid so fair, so young, to court resort,
But when by company she's introduc'd.

Emil. By merchants wives seduc'd, I hither came
To view th' apartments of the royal palace;
When sir *Hugh Spencer*, so I think he's call'd,
Kindly receiv'd, and nobly entertain'd us:
This, as he said, was by the king's command.
Then to this spot by him I was trapann'd
To kiss the royal hand of *England's* monarch;
But for that honour I had paid too dear,
And a polluted creature shou'd have been,
Spoil'd of virginity, which more than life
I prize, if by my cry your majesty
Had not been mov'd to save me from a rape.

Queen. Thou lustful satyr! can'st thou hear this
charge,
And yet not tremble? I shall live to see
Thy pandar lifted up as high as *Haman*.

King. Not whilst the sceptre in our hand we
bear,
Nor whilst the crown sits firm upon our head:
But when you rule, and we no more are king;
When you triumphant sit upon the throne,
And we, depos'd, unpity'd, and forlorn,
In some poor, homely, country cottage spend
The remnant of a wretched life; then you
With double pleasure may your wish enjoy.

Queen. That day will come much sooner than
expected. *[Aside.]*

King. But know, ambitious queen, whose pride
excels
Ev'n *Lucifer*, and all his fall'n angels,
Ere that happens, from our royal sight,
And farther from our royal person, you
Shall be remov'd; no re-admittance find
To *Edward's* breast, or harbour in his kingdom.

Queen.

Queen. You dare not tell our royal brother this;
 You, who to *France's* monarch homage pay:
 But thou canst bully a defenceless woman,
 And yet be bully'd by invading *Scots*.
 For shame, retrieve the glory you have lost;
 At least attempt it; set your country free,
 And to their barren mountains drive the crew,
 That false, perfidious, and disloyal tribe,
 That tribe of *Issachar*, and make 'em couchant.

King. Be gone this moment; from our royal
 presence

I banish thee for ever. [Ex. king Edward.

Queen. Now you hear
 My doom, fair nymph; but still my word to thee
 Shall most religiously be kept, and you
 In safety shall be re-conducted home. [Exeunt.

Scene, a room.

*The princess Eleanor, rising from her chair, comes
 forward, and speaks to young Spencer.*

Elean. Proceed: my filial duty to the king I'll
 shew,

And hear you, since it is my uncle's pleasure.

Y. Spen. If virtuous love, to innocence con-
 join'd,
 Can in your highness' bosom find a place,
 Then I may hope success will crown my wishes.
 Not that I dar'd to lift my thoughts so high,
 Had not my royal and indulgent master
 Commanded me to make my suit to you.

Elean. To hear you mention innocence, sir
 Hugh,

Who to the practice of that heav'nly blessing
 Have for a tract of time estrang'd yourself,
 And as a motive use it to persuade me
 To entertain a good opinion of you,
 Is cause sufficient, sir, to make me doubt

Your

Your virtuous love, were I not well assur'd
 You dare not offer aught to me that's rude :
 E'en though the king commanded you to do it,
 Yet I'm persuaded you would disobey him,
 For your own sake, though not perhaps for mine.
 In such case, though you were mounted high
 As your ambition's wings could carry you,
 The populace would rise and pull you down,
 Humble your pride, and spurn you to the ground.

Y. Spen. May I your favourable answer, madam,
 Give to my prince, who with impatience waits ?

Elean. Present my humble duty to my uncle,
 Tell him, I'm all obedience ; tell him too,
 Since 'tis his will to make me miserable,
 That I submit, and patiently will bear
 To lead a wretched life : to give him ease,
 Say, that I sacrifice my own repose.
 Yet one thing more remains ; add this,
 Urg'd by compulsion, though I give my hand,
 My heart shall always be at my command.

[*Ex. severally.*]

Scene, a Street before the palace.

Enter the earls of Lancaster, Warwick, Nottingham, Leicester, and Warren, followed by the mob.

Mob. Huzza ! huzza ! down with the *Spencers*,
 down with the *Spencers*.

Lan. Let no man dare approach the palace-
 gates,
 Nor raise a tumult here.

Warw. You soon shall find
 A remedy for all your miseries ;
 Soon shall you see the cause of all your woes
 A pris'ner made, and banish'd from the kingdom.

[*Ex. earls.*]

1 Mob.

1 *Mob.* Well, neighbours, if my single vote would carry it, *Lancaster* should be our king.

2 *Mob.* He is a brave man, and loves his country; besides, the royal blood is in his veins.

3 *Mob.* That does not always make the man the better *Christian*. 'Tis true, I love *Lancaster*, because he loves his country; but another lord may be as good as he.

4 *Mob.* Come, come, put an end to your politics; otherwise you may chance to speak treason before you are aware of it, and so pull an old house over your heads.

5 *Mob.* My neighbour gives you good advice; 'tis dangerous to meddle with edg'd tools.

6 *Mob.* Well said, *Toby*, the cutler; I find your trade has a proverb on its side.

5 *Mob.* Ay, ay, so it has; therefore let us obey the commands we received, and stand at a distance. [Ex. mob.]

Scene, a room in the palace.

Enter king Edward, and young Spencer.

King. What tidings from our niece? does she A strict obedience pay to our commands; Or is she stubborn, like her perverse aunt?

Y. Spen. The beauteous *Eleanor*, most royal fire, Is all compliance, and to your disposal Submits herself entirely.

King. That's well done. Soon will I make your happiness complete; But as it is not meet that she should wed A man, whose blood has not ennobled been, We will create thee, *Spencer*, first an earl.

Y. Spen. My heart exults with joy: what shall I do To show my gratitude to you, my prince?

Enter

Enter chancellor Baldoc.

Bal. O that my words an utterance could not find!

King. My lord, you seem affrighted: what's the cause?

Be not dismay'd, but freely speak your mind.

Bal. Some earls, deputed from the lords, are come

To claim this worthy knight; the rest themselves Will tell.

King. Ha! is it come to that at last?

Blasted be the tongue that made the motion!

Y. Spen. How quickly is our mirth to sorrow turn'd!

Scarce have three minutes been elaps'd, since I

Was fed with sweetest hopes; but now, alas!

Those hopes are all embitter'd. So the crew,

After a tedious voyage, view the coast

With eager eyes, and hope to reach the shore;

When, suddenly, tempestuous winds arise,

The billows foam, a shipwreck does ensue.

King. My lord, admittance to our presence give 'em. [*Ex. Bald.*

Spencer, retire; and be assur'd, thy king

Will ne'er forsake thee: and, to fret these lords,

Nay, still to gull 'em 'till their fore gangreens,

Thou, and thy father, shall our pardon have.

[*Ex. Spen. bowing.*

Enter Baldoc, with the earls of Lancaster, Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham, and Warren.

Lan. Most gracious sov'reign, we, who by the barons,

The knights, citizens, and burgessees, are sent,

Do, in their names, your majesty petition

The people's hard calamities to ease.

Leicest. Next we require, that from the realm you banish
Your

Your evil counsellors, the wicked *Spencers*;
 And that you instantly deliver up
 To us the Younger, who shall safe embark,
 And from the populace, though much incens'd,
 Or other persons, no ill treatment meet.

King. Do you condemn a man unheard? 'Tis
 hard:

No crime as yet has been alledg'd against him,
 No witnesses produc'd to prove him guilty.

War. As numberless his crimes are, as the stars;
 And all the people in one voice concur
 To prove him a delinquent, who deserves
 The worst of punishments, severest death.

Not. But, as he is your fav'rite minister,
 The parliament with justice mercy blends.

War. We therefore pray you to deliver him.

King. My lords, to shew how much we do
 regard

Our parliament, to their request we yield;
 And let this signet your commission be.

Lan. May heav'n its blessings shower down up-
 on you,

And make you reign in all your subjects hearts!

[*Exeunt.*]

King. See what a sudden turn is this, my lord!

Bal. And yet, as king, you have it in your
 pow'r

To countermine these lords.

King. By holy church,
 I'll do't.---Let us retire, and, in private, view
 How *Spencer* and these lords behave themselves.

Exeunt.

G

Enter

Scene, a chamber.

Spencer sitting in a melancholy posture.

Enter the earls, and a serjeant at arms.

Serj. Sir, as a traitor to your king and country,
Your person I arrest. [*Spencer rises in a surprise;*
his sword is taken from him.

Y. Spen. By whose authority?

Lan. By th' authority of king and parliament.

Y. Spen. Am I a traitor? Traitor in his teeth
Who calls me so!

Lan. Are you acquainted, sir,
With this? or do you know whose signet 'tis?

Y. Spen. My royal master's.

Warw. Then you must go with us,
Embark for *France*, and ne'er again return.

Leicest. If in this kingdom you are ever found,
Then of high-treason you'll be guilty deem'd,
And suffer punishment to traitors due.

Not. Conduct your pris'ner to the water-side.

[*Ex. Spen. and serj. followed by the earls.*

Enter the king and Baldoc.

King. My faithful counsellor is hurried from
me,
In whom alone I plac'd my confidence.

*Thus, when the infant from the breast is torn,
The trembling mother the lost child does mourn,
Pensive she looks, with heavy cares oppress'd,
And, spoil'd of her delight, can find no rest.*

[*Exeunt.*

End of the Third ACT.

MAJESTY



MAJESTY Missed, &c.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Scene, a room in the palace.

Enter queen Isabella, and the princess Eleanor.

Queen.  U R lives like lott'ries are : if
we by chance

Obtain one prize, we meet
with many blanks.

When those rapacious ministers,
the *Spencers*,

Invet'rate foes to us, and to our house,
Sworn enemies to all the nation, were
Sent into exile ; we then well did hope,
The baneful influence of blazing comets
Had been spent ; that all calamities
Would soon have ceas'd, and *England*, once again
To its tranquillity restor'd, be free
From base oppressors and their usurpation.

Elean. Soon as the people heard the joyful
news,

The clouds of sorrow were dispers'd ; each face
With gaiety appear'd ; the vaulted skies
No more were rended with the loud complaints
Of half-starv'd orphans, and the dismal cries
Of a poor suffering people, wanting bread.

The tears of widows now no more are seen,
 But with one gen'ral voice are thanks return'd
 For this deliv'rance to the throne of heav'n.
 On bended knees, with gratitude I paid
 My tributary praise to all the saints,
 Acknowledging their goodness shewn to me,
 When banish'd was the man whom most I hate,
 And yet design'd to be my husband.

Queen. Deep

Was the scheme, and the design well laid
 By the brave patriot-barons, at once to free
 The people from the tyranny and bondage
 Of those two ministers, who amass'd such stores
 Of ill-got wealth ; for 'tis impossible
 That they who rise with a bare competency,
 Scarcely sufficient to maintain with credit
 A family, shou'd in few years acquire
 Riches immense, and yet with honesty
 Acquire 'em. But when by artful methods,
 Discovering which way their princes bend,
 By humouring his vicious inclinations,
 They worm themselves too deep in his affection ;
 And then-----

Elean. What consequences must ensue !
 To think on them is shocking to the soul.

Queen. Such ill court fav'rites, mounted into
 power,

Assume the princely reins of government ;
 They spur the people with unbridled fury,
 Who, if they cannot cast their riders, must
 Bare tamely their severe chastisement :
 And if such fav'rites' actions they arraign,
 Or bravely censure what they do amiss,
 Fines and imprisonment must be their portion ;
 For as they use their sov'reign's royal name
 To countenance their own detested villainies,
 Judges are made subservient to their will,
 Nor can impartial justice be expected.

Without.

Without controul the nation's wealth they
plunder,

Bribe those who do not readily comply,
Provided they are men who fear 'em not;
Riot at luxury, and live at ease.

Elean. My uncle's levities are like a child's;
And what calamities must they endure
From him, whose nature is so passive grown!
Who with his ministers requests complies,
And seems not only to be govern'd by them,
But even to be actuated! Carried he is,
And, as they please, directed; he such lengths
Does run as they point out: no monarch sure
Pursued such steps, unless he did design
To bring himself and subjects to destruction.

Queen. This wicked prince, and yet more
weak than wicked,
Spurns th'advice of those good counsellors,
Who nearest are ally'd to him in blood:
Their sole intent is to preserve the nation,
And rescue him from the tyrannic sway
Of his two minions, who command his person
And the whole kingdom: yet the brave *Lan-*
caster,
And they who wish his reign might prosp'rous
be,
Would have him shine in annals, ages hence,
With envied lustre and immortal glory.
Behold this king, who cannot gain or keep,
Advances; and I must not here be seen. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter king Edward and chancellor Baldoc.

King. My good lord chancellor, what news
from *France*?

Bal. Your majesty's commands have been
obey'd.

Those wise and able statesmen, the two *Spencers,*
With

With humble thanks receiv'd your royal pardon ;
 They hir'd a vessel, presently embark'd,
 And through the waves, swift as the wind could
 blow,
 They steer'd their course, and soon at *Dover*
 landed.

A messenger, just now arriv'd, brings word
 He left 'em ten miles distant from the city.

King. These tidings fill my soul with treble
 joy.

By holy church I'll heap new honours on 'em,
 Titles confer, and give 'em large demesnes.
 A place they nearer to our royal heart
 Shall have, and their destruction work
 Who fought their ruin.-----Now, by heaven I
 swear,
 The dried parch'd earth ne'er gaped so much
 for rain,

As I do to embrace my fav'rite ministers.
 If I again consent to their exile,
 Or the request of the proud barons grant,
Egyptian slav'ry, and *Egyptian* plagues,
 For ever light on us, and on our house !

Bal. There spoke the voice of sov'reign ma-
 jesty ;

And to reward your faithful counsellors,
 Defend their persons against artful snares,
 And to replace 'em in your royal breast,
 Are actions great, and worthy of a king.

King. By all the saints, I will perform my pro-
 mise,
 Fulfil what I have said, and make the barons
 Repent their rash, undutiful petition.

Bal. They view your ministers with envy,
 fire,
 Plac'd in an orb superior far to theirs ;
 And, as of old the giants did endeavour
 To scale the battlements of heav'n's high walls,

And

And from their mansions head-long cast the gods;
 So they, with pride and insolence grown big,
 Presumptuously would force you to remove
 Your ministers, those wise sagacious statesmen,
 Then mount the ladder till they grasp the
 power,
 Usurp the sceptre, and dethrone your person.

King. That's their design, my lord, I well
 perceive it,

Though with a specious pretence to ease us
 And all our subjects they have gloss'd it over:
 But many, ere they shall obtain their wish,
 Or bring their machinations to success,
 Shall lose their heads, and fall a sacrifice.
 They, who for others dig a pit, should fall,
 In common justice, into it themselves.

Bal. They well deserve it truly; --an express
 [One winds a horn without.]
 Is now arriv'd.

King. Let's instantly withdraw,
 And know what news he brings; if from the
Spencers;
 An ample recompence shall be his portion.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene, Blackheath.

*Enter the two Spencers in their boots; the Younger
 turns about, and speaks.*

Y. Spen. Over the heath the horses lead; while
 we
 View this great river, and th' adjacent country.

Several witches rise, and appear before them.

Hah! what deformed spectacles are these!
 Forth from the earth they suddenly have sprung,
 And seem intent our journey to prevent.

Speak

Speak if your words can utterance find, and say
Who are you, what your business is, and why
You thus retard our passage? Speak.

1 *Witch.* Hail to the noble *Spencers*; and all hail
To thee, the younger; for thy safe arrival
Thy loving master with impatience waits.

2 *Witch.* All hail to thee, who shall be *Glouster's*
How I earl.

3 *Witch.* Be bold, be resolute, and no man fear:
Spite of thy foes, even *Lancaster*, and all
Who seek thy death, when they shall be no more,
Thy exaltation shall be higher far
Than *Edward's*, who the sceptre now does bear.

4 *Witch.* And yet beware of *Lancaster*; by him,
If not prevented, you will be surpris'd,
And certain death will then ensue.

Y. Spen. What mean
These riddles? *Lancaster* must die before me!
Higher than *Edward* then I shall be rais'd!
Yet to beware of *Lancaster* I'm warn'd.
Unfold your myst'ries, and in plain terms speak.

5 *Witch.* What we have said, will surely come
to pass:

Deep are the secrets in the womb of time.

Y. Spen. Explain them.

E. Spen. Prithee, do not mind 'em, son;
And yet, I've known predictions of a witch
To be fulfill'd.----Can you say aught to me?

6 *Witch.* Thou shalt be earl of *Winchester*, fir
Hugh;

And yet, thy son's great power will not avail
To save thee from an ignominious death.

1. *Witch.* Suspended in thy armour thou shalt
be,

And four days on the gibbet must remain.
Thy body taken down, thou then shalt be
Cast in the streets, and eaten by the dogs.

E. Spen. Ye midnight hags, infernal furies,
hence! My

My sword shall send ye to your native hell.

[The Witches wave their wands, &c. the Spencers offer to draw their swords, but cannot.]

My arm has lost its use.

Y. *Spen.* And so has mine ;

Depriv'd of motion, stiff it now remains.

Ye hellish crew ! take off your magic spell.

[They wave their wands again.]

2. *Witch.* Proceed in safety to your monarch's court,

And ponder well on what you've heard from us.

3. *Witch.* We could forewarn your king, but 'tis forbid ;

His death is written in the book of Time.

[They shriek and vanish.]

Y. *Spen.* This is a strange encounter with the witches,

And what to think of it I cannot tell.

E. *Spen.* To form from their words a judgment right,

Would puzzle all the sages of the world.

If aught they can predict---and yet to doubt it,

When their grand master, prince of all the air,

Does give them his assistance, is mere folly :

But yet I'll meet my fate intrepidly.

In the mean time, since there is no obstruction,

Let us pursue our journey to the court.

[Exit.]

Enter Lancaster, lord Henry his brother, and the earls of Warwick, Nottingham, Leicester, and Holland.

Lan. You find, my lords, the barons good designs

Are frustrated : shall we then tamely see

The *Spencers* from their banishment recall'd,

Their pardon granted, and yet no redress

For all the people's great calamities ?

H

Who

Who will henceforth regard King *Edward's* promise?

Hen. To the unstable fleeting winds I'd trust,
As soon as to his word.

Leicest. Did he not promise,
When younger *Spencer* pirate did commence,
The narrow seas infested, and purloin'd
Of merchants goods full forty thousand pounds,
At *Sandwich*, from one single ship, that he
Would send a squadron out to quell his insolence,
And make him answer for his depredations?

Warw. He did: but yet methinks he seem'd
well pleas'd
To hear his minion had such good success.

Not. By heaven his countenance betray'd his heart,
And in his eyes did sparkling mirth appear.

Warw. What can we hope for from a prince,
whose word
Is prostituted to the wills of others? who
By meanly subjecting himself, and all
His people, to the arbitrary power
And guidance of his favourites, is ruin'd
By their tyrannic and unlawful measures?

Leicest. A prince who is to easiness inclin'd,
Complacency, and to a base submission,
Cannot avoid the toils that are by art
Laid to trepan, and bring him to perdition.
He trusts his fav'rites, and those fav'rites plot
To render him for ever despicable.

Not. Let us once more endeavour to reduce
Effectually the *Spencers*, and again
Restore king *Edward* to himself, and free
This miserable realm, involv'd in thraldom.

Hen. Such brave exploits will make us ever famous,
And late posterity shall bless our names.

Lan.

Lan. To bring these glorious projects to perfection,

To arms, my lords, recourse must soon be had,
And death must then, or vict'ry, be our lot.

Not. Let's instantly the barons join, raise all
Our forces, and appoint a rendezvous;
Then to his country every one repair,
His troops assemble, and then form our army,
And force by force most gallantly repell,
Till laurels crown our heads, success our hopes.

[*Ex.*

Scene, the king's closet.

King Edward and Baldoc at a table.

Enter the two Spencers, who kneel; the king takes them up.

King. Welcome again, my friends, to *England's*
king;

Let me embrace ye, in my arms hold ye,

Who always shall be dearest to our person.

Come, take your places. How have you spent
your

Time, sir *Hugh*? how could you brook your exile?

[*To young Spencer.*

Y. Spen. It has not sure escap'd your royal
ears,

That I have scour'd with a few ships the channel;

And seiz'd at last a merchant-man at *Sandwich*

With goods, which I condemn'd as contraband.

King. I heard the news, and heard it with
much joy.

Y. Spen. But, sire, the seizure for your use was
made:

The money shall, pursuant to your order,

Be lodg'd, if you think fit, in your exchequer.

King. No; as you have won the prize, e'en
keep it;

'Tis a small recompence for your disgrace;
 I wish the value had been ten times more,
 And all the goods the properties of barons,
 Who meditate your death, and seek our crown.

Y. Spen. I humbly thank your majesty; such
 favours

Can never be repaid by me.

King. No more;

Thy faithful services, and thy good counsel,
 Have laid me under strongest obligations.

Now say, sir *Hugh*, what has been your success

[*To the elder Spencer.*

In *France*, and what discov'ry have you made?

El. Spencer. I wish your highness would recall
 these questions,

Which greatly do affect your royal house.

King. Tho' they affect our house, and ev'n
 our person,

Yet I will hear 'em.

El. Spen. Since then 'tis your command---

But let me not proceed.

King. By heaven thou shalt:

Would you conceal what you are in duty
 Bound to declare?

El. Spen. Then know, most royal sire,
Charles of France is fitting out a fleet
 Well mann'd, and a descent's design'd in *Cornwall*.
 At first I could not credit the intelligence,
 But the persuasive rhetoric of gold
 Reveal'd the secret spring of the machine,
 And---

King. Proceed; I grow impatient with delay.

El. Spen. If right my information be, the queen--

King. Say, what queen? mean you my *Isabella*?

El. Spen. I do, great sire; she favours their de-
 sign,

And with her brother correspondence holds.

King. Death and confusion! am I then be-
 tray'd

By

By her! This is high treason, is it not?

Bal. Most certainly.

King. Then she shall lose her head.

Y. Spen. If I may be allow'd to give advice,
Tho' the queen may be guilty of the charge,
Yet there's no evidence produced against her;
And a procedure, sire, of such a nature,
May give her brother *Charles* an occasion
To break the truce, hostilities commence,
And then to seize on your domains in *France*.
But 'tis more prudent, if I judge aright,
To take from *Isabella* all the profits
That issue from the earldom of *Cornwall*,
And one, in whom you can confide, to place
In that large country to secure the coasts.

King. That trust to you I do commit; my lord,
Go to the queen, and let her know our pleasure.

[*Ex. Baldoc.* *The scene closes.*]

Scene, a room.

The queen, sitting in a melancholy posture.

Queen. I thought last night, as in my bed I lay,
A screech-owl, omen of some great disaster,
With hideous noise flew often by my window.
Ye saints, defend me from approaching mischief!
I know the *Spencers* do complot my ruin,
Nor can I think myself secure, while they
Possess the heart of the submissive *Edward*.

Enter a messenger.

Mess. Madam, the chancellor desires admittance.

Queen. Tell him I'm ready to receive his lordship.

[*Ex. mess.*]

This is the screech-owl that I greatly fear'd,
The harbinger of woe to *Isabella*.

Enter

Enter chancellor Baldoc.

Bal. Madam, by order from the king I come,
And must acquaint you, that you have been
judg'd,
This day in council, guilty of high-treason.

Queen. Am I then made the *Spencers'* first-fruit
off'ring

Since their return? My lord, what is my charge?
Let me be try'd; my innocence shall clear me.

Bal. Madam, the king has granted you a pardon,
But, from henceforth, deprives you of the profits
Arising from the earldom of *Cornwall*,
And all your pow'r therein, lest you be led
To favour a descent upon that coast,
For which your brother *Charles* prepares a fleet.

Queen. Not one in *England* an invasion dreads,
Except the pusillanimous king *Edward*,
The *Spencers*, and their fool, the chancellor:
Your guilt and cowardice create your fears.
This artifice so thin is colour'd o'er,
It shews itself, and plainly indicates
How poorly they are skill'd in state-affairs;
Yet, trusting to their fancied great abilities,
By brib'ry and corruption, patch-work make,
Till they become the dupes of all the world.

Bal. Madam, I've executed my commission.

Queen. Say, to whose lot, my lord, is *Cornwall*
fall'n?

Bal. The younger *Spencer*, who most strenuously
Pleaded your cause, has the disposal of it.

Queen. Sure he'll engross the kingdom to him-
self!---

Let the king know that I refuse his pardon,
And do insist on ample satisfaction
For the great injury that he has done,

In casting such an odium on my character,
And treating me in so vile a manner. [Ex. Bald.
[The scene closes.

Scene, a room.

Enter young Spencer alone.

Y. Spen. Some method must be found, some art
be us'd,
To send away the queen to *France*; but time
Must bring that project to maturity,
And yet no opportunity be slipp'd.

Enter king Edward.

By an express I am inform'd, my liege,
The barons are in arms, and *Lancaster*
Is made their gen'ral.

King. In arms, did you say?
And does our uncle head the rebel-lords?

Y. Spen. They animate the people with the cry
Of *LIBERTY* and *PROPERTY*; but sure
You, sire, can see at whom they take their aim.

King. At us, at you, and all our faithful friends.
Why stand we still? Command our troops to march
And give 'em battle, ere they grow too strong.

Y. Spen. At such a crisis, no time's to be lost;
Therefore without your majesty's consent,
For which I humbly ask your royal pardon,
I ventur'd to dispatch such orders.

King. You did well.
And if a vict'ry I obtain, such slaughter
I'll make, as shall amaze posterity
When they shall read the annals of our reign.
Our presence may be needful; therefore we
Must post away.

Y. Spen. Your equipage is ready,
And all your guards, great fire, attend your
motion. [Exeunt.

Enter

Enter queen Isabella.

Queen. Heaven grant the barons good success,
and then
To condign punishment the haughty *Spencers*
Shall soon be brought; the king uncrown'd; our
son
Fix'd on the throne; and I declar'd the regent.
Then will I rule with arbitrary sway;
Strike off their heads, who have oppos'd my way;
Recall my *Mortimer*, and ev'ry night,
With am'rous flames, will revel in delight. [*Exit.*
[*A noise of fighting without.*

Enter Lancaster, with his sword drawn.

Lan. Curse on those cowards, the faint-hearted
barons,
Who, when they shou'd have fought with courage,
Basely deserted us; and their examples
Were quickly follow'd by the soldiery.
He, that deserts his country's cause, his friends,
And flies to save a poor precarious life,
Ought to be stigmatis'd by all the world,
And is unworthy of the name of Man.

Enter an officer, with his sword drawn.

Off. My lord, take quarters, or expect to
meet
The fate that's always due to a refusal.

Lan. If thou know'st *Lancaster*, thou know'st
that he
Will never yield while he can hold a sword.

Enter several soldiers, who seize Lancaster, and disarm him.

Off. Safely conduct your pris'ner to the castle,
While I acquaint the king with this success.

[*Aside.*

Lan.

Lan. That I'm o'er-power'd may with truth be
said,
But my soul knows not what it is to yield.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene, a room.

Enter king Edward and T. Spencer.

King. I have dissembled well, my friend: our
queen,

Relying on our being reconciled, consents

To our request, and now prepares

To go to *France* with our young son *Edward*.

Spen. This is beyond my expectation; now
My hopes begin to shew themselves in bloom.

[*Aside.*

Enter an Officer.

Offi. Glad tidings to your majesty I bring;
Earl Lancaster is pris'ner made, and waits
Your royal pleasure.

King. He shall quickly find,
Tho' our near kinsman, what's a traitor's doom.

Spen. The head lopp'd off, the members will lie
quiet.

King. By holy *Paul* he shall not live an hour.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter queen Isabella.

Queen. Unhappy *Lancaster*! I mourn thy fate:
O! had my pray'rs been heard, the *Spencers* then
Should have a gibbet: if my plot succeeds,
It shall be still their portion. Ha! that shout
Portends his condemnation. *Lancaster*, farewell!
And if I live, thy blood shall be reveng'd. [*Exit.*

Scene, an open country.

*Enter Lancaster, guarded by an officer and soldiers,
a mob following.*

Lan. To be made pris'ner, try'd and executed,
All in one day, is what was never heard.

I

Death

Death with undaunted brav'ry I will meet,
 And, for my country's good, will think it sweet :
 'Twas her prosperity, her good, I fought ;
 For her, and for my countrymen, I fought :
 For them I do resign my latest breath,
 And, like a patriot, welcome bid to death ;
 For who would live to see his country press'd
 With daily burthens, not to be redress'd ?

End of the Fourth A C T.



MAJESTY



MAJESTY Mifled, &c.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter young Spencer.

Y. *Spencer.*



FIRST of revenge in *English*
blood is quench'd;
The scaffolds have been drench'd
with barons gore;

No town, or city, that is worthy notice,
But what has seen the havock I have caus'd.
Whoever does presume t' oppose my will,
His life shall make atonement for his crime,
And ax or halter surely be his doom.
Lords, knights, and Squires, twice forty score at
least,
Have sacrifices been t' appease our wrath;
Nor do I reckon gentlemen therein;
Their number, like the stars, are numberless:
Even *Edward* does submit to me; who then
Shall dare withstand my absolute command?

Enter king Edward.

King. Well met, my dearest friend, now earl
of *Glou'ster*,
With my own hand this patent I deliver;

This gives you lands of large inheritance,
Sufficient to support your dignity;
And with it our niece, *Eleanor*, we give.
This for thy father is---but here he comes.

Enter elder Spencer.

Y. Spen. So far the witches, footy fiends of
hell,
Have right predicted.

King. My lord of *Winchester*,
So in this parchment you are styled, we greet
you.

No thanks shall be return'd to us, for none is due.
Think you, my lord, that the surviving barons
Will for the future dare rebell? Their lands
And tenements to us are forfeited,
Seiz'd for our use: we will dispose of 'em,
Where, when, and as its suits our royal mind.
The gaping earth, that open'd wide her cliffs,
Suck'd eagerly, 'till glutted with the blood
Of traitors; torrents down the channel ran,
And every street a deluge did appear.
But, oh! my uncle's death affects me much:
I should have spar'd the life of *Lancaster*;
Too rash, too hasty, was the step I took.

[*Afide.*

E. Spen. Such glorious actions suit a monarch's
soul;
No prince has greater than our royal *Edward*.

Y. Spen. At length the many-headed *Hydra's*
slain,
Nor can aught now disturb your halcyon rest:
Secure you reign, and nothing have to dread.
New pleasures shall be found to please your
mind:

New game I'll start, the quarry shall be yours;
Each nymph with joy shall yield to your em-
brace,
And

And proudly boast the honour she receives.
 When beauty cloy's, let politics take place ;
 When tir'd with politics, to love return.

Enter several courtiers, who present a petition to the king; he reads.

King. Ye cursed crew of evil counsellors,
 Ye whisperers, back-biters, flatterers,
 Dare ye to beg so heartily the life
 Of one so much inur'd to villainy,
 And guilty of the most notorious crimes
 That e'er proceeded from the heart of man?
 The plea you use, is a sufficient reason
 Why he should suffer ignominious death :
 His being bred at court displays his base
 Ingratitude, and does enhance his guilt.---
 My lords, take this petition, read it over,
 And read it with mature deliberation.---

E. Spen. Your majesty's commands shall be obey'd.

King. This fellow merits double punishment;
 And yet you warmly intercede for him,
 But would not speak one word for valiant *Lan-*
caster,
 Whose life and prudent counsel would have
 been
 Of greatest use to us, and to our kingdom.

Enter the ghost of Lancaster.

See, where his ghost appears ! even now I see
 His neck environ'd with a bloody circle.

[*Ex Ghost.*

Y. Spen. Whom do you see ?

King. No matter, now 'tis gone.

[*Re-enter ghost.*

Shield me, ye faints above, 'tis here again !
 How ghastly are his looks ! he shakes his truncheon,
 And

And seems to menace us with loss of empire.

Y. *Spen.* Who does ?

King. The ghost of *Lancaster* ; do you not see it ?

Y. *Spen.* Not I.

King. Why there it walks---[*Ex. ghost.*] and
now again 'tis vanish'd.

E. *Spen.* The death of *Lancaster* sits heavy on
him ;

You must divert him from these speculations.

If to himself he be again restor'd,

Then our destruction is inevitable. [*Aside.*]

King. Be gone, and don't provoke our fatal ire,
For by the soul of him who gave me breath,
Such a notorious villain, such a knave,
Shall surely die the death he has deserv'd
For his outrages and his horrid crimes. [*Ex. court.*]

Y. *Spen.* I know the wretch, great prince, and
know him well ;

He's poor, 'tis true, but an ungrateful traitor.

King. Let him be banish'd from my thoughts :
my lord,

Have you no news from *France* ? has *Charles* the
Fair

Sent back his sister, and our son prince *Edward* ?
Allur'd with presents which I sent, that king
Has banish'd from the realm queen *Isabella* ;
And it was time that she should go. Alas !

Y. *Spen.* Her wanton dalliances so glaring were,
So open they appear'd at court, her brother,
Provok'd with shame, commanded her departure.

King. Name me the man, with whom the queen
thus dally'd.

Y. *Spen.* That cursed wretch, the traitor
Mortimer.

King. Ha ! say'st thou so ? but to what place
is she

Retir'd ?

Y. *Spen.*

Y. *Spen.* To *Flanders*; where 'tis said she now
remains,
And aid solicits from the earl of *Hainault*.
Exeter's bishop, your ambassador,
Made these discov'ries by his diligence.

King. Audacious strumpet! is this then the fruit
Of her pretended sanctity at last?
When women over-zealous grow, there's cause
To think a snake lies lurking in the grass.
My lord, who brought you this intelligence?

Y. *Spen.* Great sire, the bishop is arriv'd from
France.

King. Confirm'd by him, this news ourself will
have:
In the mean time, to th' earl of *Hainault* send,
Load him with presents to return the queen
And *Edward*, unassisted: if he fails,
Tell him by force we will his earldom seize,
His country burn, and use him as a traitor.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene, a room in a country town.

Enter queen Isabella.

Queen. Once more on *English* ground we set our
feet,
And *Edward* must, or *Isabella*, fall:
Prince, guard thyself; for by the saints I swear
To seize the throne, or perish in th' attempt.
The firmament can't bear two suns, nor *England*
Behold in peace two reigning powers at once.
O *Lancaster*! to thee I'll sacrifice
Those rav'nous harpies, the king's minions,
Spencers;
But, ah! how insufficient are their lives
T' appease thy ghost! whole hecatombs should
bleed,
Thou best of friends, but most unhappy patriot.

Enter

Enter sir William Truffel.

Truff. Madam, young *Lancaster* has join'd your troops,

The barons hourly their forces bring,
And wish your majesty success.

Queen. Sir *William*,

This welcome news presages our prosperity.

Truff. With a strong party the brave *Lei'ster* comes,

To pay unfeign'd obedience, and to offer
His service to you.

Queen. He at all times declared

Himself an open foe to the two *Spencers*.

We will confer with *Lancaster* and him,

And give 'em tokens of our high esteem.

Sir *William*, let 'em know our good intentions,

Tell 'em how much we have 'em in our favour.

[*Ex. sir William.*

The morning of our enterprise appears

Calm and serene : the noon with double lustre

May shine ; if so, before the night approaches,

All things shall answer what we most desire. [*Exit.*

Enter king Edward.

King. Haunted by *Lancaster's* grim ghost, my
soul

No rest can find, my quietude is lost ;

Where-e'er I bend my steps, he still pursues me.

Two minutes are not past, when in his hand

I saw him grasp my royal crown and sceptre,

Then dash'd 'em on the ground, like brittle
ware,

And broke 'em in ten thousand pieces. This

Seem'd a prognostic of approaching evil.

Ye saints, look down, avert th' impending blow,

And with your aid prevent my overthrow.

Enter

Enter young Spencer, as the king is going out.

Y. *Spen.* O, whither do you go? Return, my liege,

For much I fear we are undone for ever:
News of vast moment I must now relate,
News, which has made my very soul to tremble;
Then fortify your mind, your reason summon,
And all the saints invoke to guard you.

King. Prithee proceed; thy long ambages,
Spencer,

Give me much pain, and shock my resolution
More than what you can possibly relate.
Keep me no longer therefore in suspense,
But briefly tell me all that you have heard.

Y. *Spen.* At *Orewell*, *fire*, in *Suffolk*, *Isabella*,
The prince, and that arch-traitor *Mortimer*,
Are landed with a num'rous band of foreigners:
Kent and young *Lancaster* their troops have
join'd

With hers; and *Leicester*, with the other barons,
Are in full march to form a powerful army.

King. My fears increase, and *Edward* now must
fall.-----

Publish, without delay, a proclamation,
With promise of a thousand pounds to him
Who brings the head of *Mortimer*; then go,
And tell the citizens of *London* we
Require their aid.

Y. *Spen.* That task's already done;
My father undertook it; here he comes.

Enter eldest Spencer.

King. What answer from the *Londoners*, my
lord?

E. *Spen.* They say, great sire, they with all
duty will

K

Their

Their king, their queen, and young prince *Edward* honour;

But that their gates should be fast shut against
All foreigners, and traitors to the realm,
Which with their utmost power they would defend;

That by their charter they were not oblig'd
Farther to go beyond their city-bounds
To fight, than that they may return before
The sun should set.

King. A quibbling answer this.

As we are destitute of friends, my lords,
No army now on foot, I judge it meet
That we with *Baldoc* to the West retire,
And for our persons safety enter *Bristol*.
If we from thence should be compell'd to fly,
To *Ireland* we must retreat, and there
Raise forces to regain what we have lost.

Y. Spen. We shall obey whatever you command,
And ne'er desert so good a prince. [Exeunt.

Enter queen Isabella, and sir William Trussel.

Queen. Our army daily does increase by troops
Brought from all parts. A manifesto publish,
Drawn in the names of us, the prince, and earl
of *Kent*.

Set forth the reasons of our taking arms,
To free the church and state from the oppression
Occasion'd by the mal-administration
Of the weak *Edward*, a misguided king,
And the tyrannic sway of the two *Spencers*.

Truss. I shall observe your orders.

Queen. You may add,
That those unworthy fav'rites, their adherents,
Aiders, and abettors, should in justice be
Declared the foes of state; who by their vile
Pernicious counsel, and the grand abuse
Of royal power, unjustly have depriv'd

Some

Some of their lives, and some of their estates,
 Their liberties, and all that they hold dear ;
 That these, and many more enormities,
 Have by the *Spencers* perpetrated been,
 Regarding not the laws, or people's rights.

Truss. Your majesty's instructions I will follow,
 And by my diligence I hope to shew
 How punctual I have been. [Ex.]

Enter Henry of Lancaster, and the earl of Leicester.

Queen. We greet you well,
 Dear cousin, and you, my lord of *Leicester*.
 By your example led, I make no doubt
 But that our other subjects soon will join us ;
 And if no news we hear this day from *Edward*,
 We mean to march our army on to *London*.

Hen. Spies I have sent to watch his motions,
 madam,
 And shall receive the earliest intelligence,
 Which I, with pleasure, will communicate.

Leicest. The *Spencers* will attend him where he
 goes,
 And that great scandal to his function, *Baldoc* ;
 A leash of such vile traitors ne'er were seen.

Queen. If I can get 'em in my power, my lords,
 They soon shall feel the edge of our resentment.
 Remember well, my noble trusty lords,
 Nor from your memories let aught deface it,
 The common cause of liberty requires
 That nothing from our knowledge be conceal'd.

Lan. May he be stigmatis'd with th' odious
 names
 Of Villain, Coward, vile Assassin, nay,
 Plund'rer of his Country, Foe to Merit ;
 May he be charged with brib'ry and corruption,
 Ambition, avarice ; tho' he be rais'd,
 Like the two *Spencers*, to the height of power,
 May he deservedly be tumbled down,

Perish unpity'd, and by all detested !
 Aught that's contriv'd against a gracious queen,
 Their country's welfare, and the people's good,
 Should by true Patriots timely be declared.

Leicest. For these great ends, determin'd we are
 come

To sacrifice our fortunes, and our lives,
 If need require it.

Queen. Your fame's so well establish'd,
 So many proofs you have already given,
 I question not your loyalty, my lords,
 But with your conduct am well satisfy'd.

[*Ex. Lan. and Leicest.*

Suspicion is a touch-stone, and by this
 We ought to try each man's fidelity ;
 The real from the counterfeit is seen
 By the essay ; it puts us on our guard,
 And warns us not to be too credulous.
 To doubt, is th' unerring way to knowledge ;
 But sure it argues weakness in a statesman,
 To trust to words and plausibilities.
 How many well-concerted schemes have perish'd,
 How many men have been to ruin brought,
 By placing an implicit faith in those
 They never try'd in matters of small moment !
 Yet, to do justice to the noble lords,
Lancaster and *Leicester*, they have often been
 Prov'd, and to deviate never yet known.

[*Exit.*

Scene, Bristol.

Enter king Edward, young Spencer, and Baldoc.

King. My lords, this loyal city well deserves
 Some royal tokens of our princely favour ;
 She open'd wide her gates to bid us welcome,
 And her inhabitants with tears of joy
 Receiv'd their much-distress'd, unhappy king.
 So the benighted traveller at last,
 By fortune led, to some poor cottage comes ;

The

The good old woman quits her spinning-wheel,
Blows up the fire, a lodging she provides,
And saves him from the air's inclemency ;
The poor itinerant returns his thanks,
By dawn of day, with varied steps, jogs on,
In hopes to find at night a resting-place.

Y. Spen. Thus we, great sire, are but sojourners
here,

For ere the rebels can besiege the town,
We our own safeties must secure by flight.

King. --- A ship, well mann'd, rides anchor'd in
the road,
And boats both day and night by turns do wait
To take us in, when there shall be occasion.

Enter elder Spencer.

E. Spen. The mayor, the aldermen, and com-
mon-council,
Having prepared a sumptuous entertainment,
Humbly entreat your sacred majesty
To dine with them.

King. --- They must not be deny'd,
Tho' jollity ill suits our present circumstance ;
However, let 'em know, my lord, that we
Will honour 'em with our presence. In what
Condition do you find the city ? Say,
Will it hold out a fortnight's siege ?

E. Spen. Oh ! no ;
So rotten are its walls, in twenty hours,
A breach may soon be made for sixty men
To march in front.

King. We must withdraw in time. [*Aside.*
My lord of *Winchester*, this city's gov'nor
We do appoint you, and to your good conduct
We now commit it.

E. Spen. 'Till over-power'd by force,
I'll make the best defence I can devise.

King. Your courage nor experience do I doubt.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene, a room.

Queen Isabella alone.

Queen. Tho' conscious of my crime, I can't refrain ;

Ambition eggs me on, and thirst of power
Supreme still prompts me to attain the summit.
Thus with the elephant, whene'er they meet,
Contends the fam'd *rhinoceros*, tho' small ;
Small, if compar'd to his stupendous bulk ;
Nor does the combat cease, 'till with his horn
He gores his foe, and conqueror remains.

Enter Henry of Lancaster.

From *London* are your spies return'd, my lord ?

Hen. Yes, madam ; but I hear you have receiv'd
News of his majesty's retreat to *Bristol*.
That city by our troops is now besieg'd.

Queen. For *Ireland* is the king embark'd, and
left

To elder *Spencer* absolute command.
How do the *Londoners* behave, my lord ?

Hen. For you that loyal city has declared.
In vain to keep it for his royal master
Did *Stapleton* his best endeavours use.
His efforts tended only to excite
The fury of the populace against him ;
Who treating him with great indignity,
And shewing to his mitre no regard,
At length depriv'd that bishop of his head.
The citizens, enraged against the king,
Masters of the tower have made themselves,
And all the pris'ners, who had been confin'd
By the tyrannic *Spencers*, are releas'd.

Queen. This is great news indeed, and worth
our notice.

Enter

Enter sir William Trussel.

Truss. Madam, your gen'ral and fam'd knight
sir *John*

De Hainault, by exprefs, account does send
That *Bristol* has surrender'd, *Spencer's* taken;
Edward by adverse winds is driven back,
Who, with his few domestics and dependants,
Now lurk in *Wales*, expecting better fate.

Queen. To *Lancaster* the charge we do commit
To go in quest of *Edward*; that you may
With more facility discover where
He and his adherents now are shelter'd:
Let your companions be sir *William Zouch*,
And *Rice ap Howel*; give two thousand pounds
As a reward for sure intelligence:
The *Welch*, a poor, distress'd, and needy people,
For lucre soon will give 'em up to you;
To *Monmouth* castle let 'em be conducted.
Cousin, we wish you good success.

Hen. Madam,
With joy my duty I'll discharge, and like
The tow'ring falcon swoop upon my prey.

[*Exit.*

Queen. Be it your care, sir *William*, to demand
From *Edward* the great seal.--- That once obtain'd,

[*Ex. sir Wm.*

Then on the top of Fortune's wheel I stand,
And could I but prevent the curs'd rotation,
Like mighty *Jove* I'd keep the world in awe,
Despotic be, and make my will a law. [*Exit.*

Scene, a thatch'd house.

Enter king Edward, young Spencer, and Baldoc.

King. Now, *Spencer*, if thy head was ever turn'd
For politics, some method now invent
How to restore thy prince. By heaven I'll share
Dominion

Dominion with the man, who on the throne
Again can place me.

Y. *Spen.* Did you ever know
A minister in jeopardy of death,
Whose thoughts were not employ'd to save his
life?

If these abortive prove, who can expect
He should procure another person's safety
Under the same dilemma with himself?

Bal. Since other methods ineffectual prove,
And as the great success of *Isabella*
Intimidates the loyal hearts, who would
Be forward to assist your majesty;
As our last subterfuge, we must by prayer
Address the saints for aid.

Y. *Spen.* Is this a time
To pray? Much rather to some sea-port town
Let's go, and once more launch into the main.

King. The last advice obtains my approbation.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene, the country.

Enter the elder Spencer, as going to execution, followed by the sheriff, mob, &c.

E. *Spen.* With honesty and honour I have liv'd,
'And for my country gallantly have fought,
'Till the court air I breath'd, and then
Too soon infected were my principles.
Ambition, and a blind paternal fondness,
To see my son prime minister of state,
Have in my night of life involv'd me
In those excesses which have made me odious;
Now I resign myself, the queen can do
No more than nature would have quickly done.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene,

Scene, Gloucester.

Enter king Edward, young Spencer, and Baldoc, followed by Lancaster and guards; Spencer in chains like a slave.

King. How, cousin, is your king to be dispos'd?

Hen. You in the castle, fire, must be confin'd
With bishop *Baldoc*. *Spencer's* to be led
To yonder hill, and on the gallows there,
Fifty feet high erected for him, hang'd.
Guards, take him hence, while I attend the king.

[Ex. king Edw. Bal. and Lan. with some of the guards.]

Y. Spen. Curse on those midnight hags, those
fiends of hell,
Who told me that I should be exalted!
Curse on all those to whom I owe my death!
I'll doubly curse 'em with my latest breath.

[Exeunt.]

Scene, a room.

Enter king Edward, and sir William Trussell.

Truss. Sir, you are judg'd incapable of reigning,
By queen and parliament you are dethron'd,
A thousand marks per month is your allowance.
Your son, young *Edward*, is elected king,
And the great seal from you I now demand.

King. That, sir, shall be deliver'd.---I confess,
The nation's goodness to my son, prince *Edward*,
Does in some measure mitigate my grief.-----

By my example warn'd, let monarchs know,
And see the cause of their own overthrow;
Their subjects love be studious to obtain,
And in their hearts, not in their fav'rites reign;
Hear mildly their complaints, their wrongs redress,
The surest path that leads to happiness.

L

Thus

Thus when the good, just, *Roman* emperor,
 Attended by his guards, rode forth to war,
 A woman he beheld, who forward press'd,
 While anxious cares sat heavy on her breast;
 Touch'd was the heav'n-born *Trojan* with remorse;
 Without delay alighting from his horse,
 Bid her declare her mind, dispel her grief,
 Heard her complaint, and granted her relief.

Had I my subjects grievances redress'd,
 How happy had I been! how lov'd! how bless'd!
 But, oh! my errors now too late I see,
 And must spin out a life with infamy.

F I N I S.

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